

BOBBY BENSON'S

10c

B-BAR-B RIDERS

No. 5



IN THIS ISSUE
THE COWBOY
AND
THE COPTER



WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM



HI-YO! KIDS!

LONE RANGER'S

'Silver Bullet'

BALL POINT Pen Set

With Cowboy's Belt

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YOUR 3 PENS WRITE

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for
danger
BLUE
for
secret
GREEN
for
"HI-YO!
Let's GO!"

You Get

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- 1 Cartridge Holder
- 1 Tooled Western Belt
- 1 Engraved Longhorn Buckle in Simulated Silver all for \$1.98

all for **\$1.98**

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BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

THAT'S FIFTY TO SIXTY PEOPLE LOADED WITH TRAVEL MONEY ON EACH O' THEM BUSES—WHAT A HAUL! HYAR'S A FOOL-PROOF PLAN—BUG AN' LANK KIN GO UP THUH ROAD A PIECE, SEE...



A SHORT TIME LATER—UP THE ROAD...

HERE'S THE ROAD FORK, ALL RIGHT, JEST LIKE HANDLEBAR SAID!

FINE! WE LET THE BUS GO BY...



NOW, QUICK WITH THIS SIGN...!



SMART! THET BUS IS ALL ALONE ON THET ROAD NOW!



DOWN THE ROAD...

THUNDER! THIS IS GOING TO SMASH MY SCHEDULE!



WONDER WHAT KIND OF BLASTING'S GOING ON AROUND HERE? MIGHT AS WELL STEP OUT AND TAKE A STRETCH, FOLKS.



RIGHT! TAKE A BIG STRETCH, FOLKS—TO THE SKY! THIS IS THUH KIND OF BLASTING THAT'S GOIN' ON!



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BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

WE'LL RIDE THAT BUS FULL SPEED DOWN THE SIDE ROAD—AND THEN WE'VE GOT A CHANCE OF CUTTING RIGHT IN BETWEEN THOSE OWL-HOOTS AND THE BORDER! LET'S GO!



THIS WAY, RIDERS— THIS WAY!



B-BAR-BEEEEEE!



HOLY SMOKE! ANOTHER AMBUSH! THIS COUNTRY'S GETTING DANGEROUS!

YOU BETTER STOP OR THEY'LL SHOOT, DRIVER! THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO ROB, ANYWAY!



TAKE IT EASY, FOLKS— THIS AIN'T NO HOLD-UP! WE'RE ON THE TRAIL OF THOSE OWLHOOTS—ALL OF US!



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The LEMONADE KID



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IN THE STOLEN CAR, THE PHANTOMS
RACE AT BREAKNECK SPEED FROM
TOWN AND OUT ONTO THE SAGE FLATS.

LET 'EM CHASE US!
THEY'LL NEVER CATCH
THE PHANTOMS!



HERE WE ARE, BOYS!
AT THE JUMP-OFF SPOT!
LET'S GO...



SOME HOURS LATER, A HARD-RIDING
POSSE OVERTAKES THE ABAND-
ONED GETAWAY CAR...

NO FOOT-
PRINTS AT
ALL!

THEY
COULDN'T HAVE
GONE ANYWHERE
-- BUT THEY DID!

BEATS
ME!



AGAIN AND AGAIN,
THE PHANTOMS
STRIKE! ALWAYS
THEY STEAL A
CAR, AND ALWAYS
THEY ABANDON IT!
THE PATTERN IS
EVER THE SAME,
WITH THE SAME
MYSTERIOUS
DISAPPEARANCE,
SEEMINGLY INTO
THIN AIR!



NEWSPAPER PRESSES ROAR OUT
THE STORY OF THEIR EVIL
DEEDS...



AT THE B-BAR-B RANCH, FOREMAN TEX
MASON VAULTS A RUNNING HORSE...

GIT UP, BOY! MAKE TRACKS!
JUST GOT A PHONE CALL FROM
WASHINGTON! THOSE PHANTOMS HAVE
RAIDED A FEDERAL BANK...



...WHICH MEANS THAT
I CAN STEP IN, AS A
FEDERAL OFFICER...
AND AS THE
LEMONADE KID!



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I'LL CHOP DOWN-- OOPS!



I CAN'T SEE!



UP TO THE ROOF!



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A HELICOPTER! NO WONDER THOSE PHANTOMS COULD DISAPPEAR WITHOUT LEAVING ANY TRACKS! ALL THEY HAD TO DO WAS PARK THEIR STOLEN CAR AND WAIT FOR THE HELICOPTER TO COME AND GET THEM!



THIS IS GOING TO BE CLOSE...



WITH A DESPERATE RUN AND JUMP, THE LEMONADE KID FLINGS HIMSELF UPWARD, FINGERS STRAINING TOWARD THE SWAYING ROPE LADDER!



THE FOOL! I'LL YANK UP THE LADDER! HE'LL MISS IT AND FALL TO THE GROUND!



BUT THE POWERFUL FINGERS OF THE LEMONADE KID WRAP AROUND THE LOWEST RUNG OF THE LADDER...

IF THEY START TO SHOOT BEFORE I CAN GET UP UNDER THE 'COPTER-- I'M DONE FOR!



ONE MORE RUNG AND I'M SAFE!



AS SAFE, THAT IS, AS ANYBODY IN THIS POSITION COULD BE! AND WHAT DO I DO WHEN THEY START TO LAND!

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BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

'POW'
'WOW'



WINDY WALES



OOE, UNCLE WINDY, TELL US AGAIN HOW YOU CAPTURED THAT WHOLE GANG OF OWL-HOOTING SINGLE-HANDED, WILL YOU, HUM?

SHUCKS, KIDS - THEY WEREN'T NOthin'! BUT I'LL TELL YUH 'BOUT THUH TIME I REALLY WAS IN DANGER - AN' IT'LL CURDLE YORE INSIDES, IT WILL...!

YEP, IT ALL BEGAN THAT DAY TEX AN' BOBBY ASKED ME TUH GIT RID O' THUH ANTS...

"...THEY HANDED ME SOME KIND OF ANT-POISON THEY'D BOUGHT..."

THAT ANT COLONY THAT'S BEEN PLAGUING US IS LOCATED SOMEWHERE IN THIS KITCHEN, WINDY. HOW ABOUT FINDING IT AND PUTTING SOME OF THIS ANT POISON OVER IT WHILE WE'RE GONE?

WE'LL BE BACK RIGHT AWAY.

"SOMEHOW, I JUST DIDN'T TRUST THAT STORE-BOUGHT STUFF..."

SHUCKS! THIS HERE STUFF AIN'T STRONG 'NUFF TUH KILL NOthin'! I BETCHA I COULD MAKE A BETTER ANT POISON! DOG-GONIT, I'M GOIN' TUH GIT BOBBY'S CHEMICAL SET AN' TRY!

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"WAL THUH POTION I CONCOCTED SHORE SABLED STRONG!
WOMP! TUM KILL ANYTHING! I KEPT A RECORD OF WHAT I
PUT INTUH IT SO I WOULNT FORGIT THUH FORMULA..."

JEST THINK OF IT—THEM LITTLE ANTS
GOT A TINY WORLD ALL THEIR
OWN. I BETCHA THEY EVEN
TALK TUM EACH OTHER—
ONLY THEIR VOICES
MUST BE SO SMALL
THEY WE CAIN'T
HEAR. ITS A
PITY TUM KILL
THUH PORE
THINGS...



"...BUT THIS HERE POTION O'WINE
IS GOIN' TUM DO THUH TRICK!"



"WAL SEEMS I JEST SAT BACK IN A CHAIR FER A
MINUTE TUM SEE WHAT'D HAPPEN..."

IF THIS STUFF REALLY WORKS, I'LL MAKE A MILLION
ON IT! YUP—WINDY WALES,
SCIENTIST EXTRAORDINARY!



"...WHEN, SUDDENLY, I HEAR STRANGE VOICES
TALKIN' BEHIND ME. THEY WAS CLEAR, HIGH-
PITCHED VOICES AN' THEY TALKED LIKE PEOPLE
USED TUM TALK LONG LONG AGO..."



"WAL I SHORE DUCKED OUTTA THET ONE JUST AS FAST AS I
COULD. AN' WHEN I LOOKED AROUND..."



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BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY DENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

"IT DIDNT TAKE NO TIME AT ALL AFORE WE KILLED ALL THEM ANTS, INCLUDING HIS NIBS, THE KING. THEN WE JEST STOOD THAR IN THE MIDDLE O' THE PRAIRIE AN' STARED AT EACH OTHER..."

GOLLY, FELLERS - WE MIGHT JUST AS WELL BE LOST ON A DESERT ISLAND FOREVER! WE CAN NEVER TALK TO OUR FRIENDS. WE'LL NEVER FIND FOOD ENOUGH TO KEEP US ALIVE. WE'RE JUST TOO BIG TO LIVE!



YES, BOBBY. I GUESS THAT'S THE HORRIBLE TRUTH! WE'RE LOST - FOREVER! AND ALL BECAUSE WINDY DECIDED TO PLAY AROUND WITH SOME CHEMICALS.

IT'S ALL MY FAULT, I GUESS. GULP!



BOYS, I SHORE FEEL MIGHTY LOW 'BOUT WHAT I DONE. DOGHONIT, I'M GOIN' TUM END IT ALL! I'M GOIN' TUM JUMP IN THE RIVER!

WINDY - STOP! DON'T! OH, TEX - HE'S GOING TO DROWN HIMSELF!



WINDY, STOP!

NOPE! HYAR GOES! GOODBYE BOYS - FOREVER!



"WAL - THE FACT O' THUH MATTER WUZ, I WUZ JEST TOO BLAMED BIG TUM EVEN DROWN..."

AW, SHUCKS!



YUP, I WUZ SO BIG, THE RIVER WUZ JEST KNEE-HIGH TUM ME. COULDN'T DROWN IF I WANTED TUM!

GOLLY WINDY! BUT HOW'D YOU EVER GET BACK TO YOUR NORMAL SIZE LIKE NOW?



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JOB FOR A RANGER!

DAVE Lafferty walked his tired gelding down the dusty main street. At every step, he felt the tiredness creep up from boots and gunbelt, through chest and arms and shoulders. He had ridden more than two hundred miles in ten hours, hunting Flash Rankin. Now he had found him—too late.

Ten miles back, he had taken the ranger badge he wore under his steerhide vest and thrown it away. A badge would only be a target for a .45 bullet in this town, which outlaws and gamblers ran wide open. The sight of a Texas Ranger would make trigger fingers itch. And Dave Lafferty was going to have enough trouble finding a way to bring Flash Rankin out of this town and back to Laredo to stand trial for murder, without worrying over more.

He came out of the kak in front of a sun-beaten falsefront that proclaimed the shack behind it to be a hotel. Looping the tie-reins around the wooden hitchrail, Dave walked across the porch and into the shade of the dusty hotel lobby.

There were three men in the lobby, staring at him. Hardcase riders, all of them, with their Colts slung low on their thighs. Dave brushed them with his eyes on his way to the hotel desk. He picked up a pen and scrawled a name not his own.

"Reckon I can get me a hot bath to wash some of this dirt off?" he asked. "I been trampin' around, back in the hills. Met an old prospector—"

He broke off as if he had said too much. He heard the excited stirrings of the three men behind him. One of them got up and went out. Dave thought, *He's gone to tell somebody about me and that prospector!* Word would sweep the town. He would be a marked man for these owlhoot killers. If he met a prospector, he would have shot him—if the prospector had found any gold. That was what the outlaws would say, among themselves.

Dave went up the rickety stairs with the trace of a smile on his lips. It might not be so hard, after all, getting Flash Rankin out of this town. He himself was the bait. He squirmed uncomfortably, wondering if Flash Rankin was as fast with a gun as everyone said he was.

He luxuriated in the hot water for an hour, letting some of the tiredness seep out with the dirt. He dressed and went down into the restaurant attached to the hotel, feeling the

eyes fixed steadily on him. Word had gotten around. He could read the avarice in the hard faces.

Dave ate slowly, wondering if his scheme was going to boomerang. If one of those men with the greed etched in their eyes and lips were to shoot him down from an alleyway in the hopes of finding a map on his dead body, it would have backfired. But if one of them went to Flash Rankin, who was kingpin of the longriders, Flash might work up an interest in a bona-fide gold mine. With enough gold, he might hope to buy himself a pardon.

The doorway darkened. Dave glanced up, recognizing the ice-blue eyes and tawny hair from a dozen reward dodgers. Flash came from the doorway toward his table, a smile on his thin lips. He pulled back a chair and sat down.

"Stranger in town, aren't you?" he asked.

Dave nodded. He said, "I've been riding a lone trail back in the Medicine Hills."

"That's gold country, I hear. Strike anything?"

Dave licked his lips and looked around the restaurant. No one was eating. They were all watching him. He shovelled another forkful of beans and pork into his mouth, and shrugged.

Rankin chuckled coldly. "Don't bother about these coyotes! Mebbe you don't know me. I'm Flash Rankin!"

Dave let his eyes open wide in simulated amazement, and choked on his food. When he swallowed he said, "Why, by cactus! Reckon you won't be thinkin' of turnin' me over to any lawman for what I did—that is . . ."

Flash Rankin slapped him on the shoulder cordially, and laughed. "Let's you and me team up for a little poker game, *amigo*. Here, give me that food check, I'll take care of it."

Side-by-side, ranger and outlaw crossed the street, heading toward *The Outlaw Queen*. The kerosene lamps were on, cutting through the faint twilight haze. From the interior came the sounds of chips and a woman's laughter.

Hours later, Dave Lafferty pushed in the pile of chips before him, and yawned. He said to the men around the table, "I'm plumb sleepy. Reckon I'll hit for the hotel."

Rankin stood up, gathering in his winnings. "I'll go with you, Dave. Us partners have to stick together."

The famous outlaw let his cold eyes move around the room. Men dropped their gaze

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before his steady look. These were ordinary killers, here. They wanted no part of Flash Rankin's flaming sixgun. Dave Lafferty knew his life was safe from all of them — except Rankin himself.

As they went down the saloon steps, Dave said, "We'd make a good team at that, Flash. I got a map to a gold mine hidden out yonder. If we were to ride to it tomorrow, then go — er — prospectin' for that gold . . ."

He let his words trail off, as Rankin drew in a deep breath. Flash said, "I'd like that fine. You and me to go find that map . . ."

He did not have to finish his words. Two men would go out for the map, but only one of them would return. Rankin slapped Dave on the shoulder as he turned aside in front of the hotel.

Dave went inside, a frown riding his forehead. He had set the trap. Tomorrow at dawn he and Flash Rankin would ride stirrup to stirrup out of town. But when they were outside — would he be able to beat Flash Rankin's gunhand?

He worried for hours, lying sleepless on his bed. Finally he got up, took six bullets from his gunbelt, and set them on the bare-topped table. Then he went out into the hall in his stockinged feet, found a cuspidor, and brought it back into his room.

* * *

It was some hours after dawn as Dave and Flash Rankin reined in close to a red sandstone bluff thrusting sharply up from the sloping desert floor. Dave climbed down from the saddle as Flash watched him. There was cold sweat under Dave's shirt. All the long way from the outlaw town, he had tried to think of a way to get Flash from his saddle, without success.

Now he was at the rock where he had hidden the map he had drawn. He silently thanked his stars that he had taken the precaution to draw and hide that map, to go along with his story of found gold and a murdered prospector.

Dave went to the rock and stooped over. Behind him, he heard saddle leather creak as Rankin came down to the ground. Rankin said slowly, "Better let me lift that rock, *amigo*."

Rankin bent and lifted the rock. There was a folded square of paper under it. Rankin smiled slightly. "I had to be sure you wasn't after my scalp," he said. "There's rewards enough on it to make it look good to some hombres."

He unfolded the map. As his eyes lighted on it, Dave moved. He jumped for Rankin, shoved him with both hands, yanked him to one side. "A rattler!" he yelled. His flying jump tumbled the outlaw, rolled him in the dirt. Rankin swore and squirmed, flailing with his arms.

Dave muttered, "Take it easy, Flash! I saved your life. That rattler would have got you, sure! He's crawled back under those rocks, by now."

Dave bent and picked up the outlaw's gun where it lay covered with sand. He said, "I shouldn't have been so rough, Flash, I'm plumb sorry. Here, let me clean it for you."

Flash fixed him with a cold eye, then shrugged. A man couldn't refuse such a request from someone who'd just saved his life. He opened the map and began to study it, occasionally glancing over at Dave who was brushing the sand off his gun, polishing it, removing the bullets and thrusting other bullets into the cylinder . . .

Dave grinned and handed back the Colt. Rankin took it idly, examined it, and thrust it into his holster. He was smiling with twisted lips.

"You sure this map is for a gold mine?" he questioned. "Mebbe that prospector you shot was only funnin' you!"

He wants to be plumb sure before he draws on me, thought Dave wryly as he dug down into his levis. *He figures there's no sense drawing unless he's got a sure thing!*

He brought out a little leather bag with bulging sides. He opened the drawstrings and dumped little round yellow nuggets on his outstretched palm. Dave had found them a month ago, back in the Sierras, and had put them away carefully, against just such an emergency as this. It was the bulge of the sack in his levis as he rode into the outlaw town that had given him his idea.

Flash Rankin took the nuggets and examined them. Then with a practiced, fluid movement, his right hand dropped and brought up his Colt. The flashing hand was so swift that Dave caught his breath even as he put his own hand on his gunbutt.

Flash said, "I'm plumb sorry, *amigo*. But I can use that gold mine, all by myself!"

Dave said, "Look at those nuggets again, hombre. They're iron pyrites — fool's gold! And you can put your gun away, too. It won't shoot."

Dave brought his own gun out, and levelled it at Rankin's belly. The outlaw blinked and thumbed his gun. There was no thundering report, only a click as his gun-hammer landed on a useless cartridge.

Dave chuckled, "I spent last night emptying six bullets and putting sand from a cuspidor in them! When I knocked you over because of a rattler that wasn't there, I slipped them into your gun."

He reached out and took Rankin's gun from him. Flash Rankin would go back to Laredo now, and face trial for murder. A Texas Ranger had been given a job, and had done it!

THE END

BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



AN UNBROKEN STALLION CAN BE A LIVING THUNDERBOLT OF COILED FURY AND DANGER! A HATE-TWISTED HORSE-THEIF CAN BE A HUMAN MACHINE FOR DEATH AND DESTRUCTION! MIX THE TWO...MAN AND BEAST...AT THE TIME OF THE FALL HORSE ROUND-UP OF THE B-BAR-B BREED...AND THERE'S A FAST-RIDING, FAST-SHOOTING, TENSE TALE OF PERIL IN WHICH...
"BOBBY WINS HIS SPURS!"

SURE, 'TIS MIGHTY TIRED I AM! IT TOOK US ALL DAY THERD THIS BUNCH O' WILD HORSES INTO THIS FEEDIN' BENCH.

TALK 'BOUT FEEDIN'.. WE AIN'T ET ALL DAY...



BY CACTUS, EF WE DON'T GIT NO RELIEF MIGHTY SOON, I'M GOIN' TUH BE RAISIN' CAIN 'ROUND HYAR!

KEEP YOUR PANTS ON, WINDY. HERE COMES THE LI'L BOSS!



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...AND THE ENRAGED, RAINED BEAST ROCKETS LIKE A COILED SPRING!

THERE! NOW I'VE GOT TO KEEP HIM RUNNING...CAN'T LET HIM STOP FOR A MINUTE OR HE'LL BUCK AND ROLL. I'LL JUST KEEP WORKING AWAY WITH MY SPURS...



...I HATE TO DO THIS TO ANY HORSE, BUT IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE TO LIVE THIS OUT...IF I CAN ONLY LAST... THIS TERRIBLE POUNDING... BUT I'VE GOT TO RUN HIM OUT, JUST GOT TO...

WHEE-HEE-EE!



THE MADDENED HORSE SOON PUTS PLENTY OF DISTANCE BEHIND HIM...

HOLY SMOKE, LOOKIT THAT!

IT'S BOBBY! LASHED TO THAT WILD HORSE! LET'S GO!



THAT HOSS IS JEST TOO FAST FER US TEX. WE CAN'T MAKE HEADWAY!

BUT NOT TOO FAST FOR AMIGO! LOOK AT THAT BALONINO GO!



AMIGO! WHEE-EE-EE-EE!



SWIFTLY AND SAVAGELY AMIGO CUTS IN FRONT OF THE WILD HORSE AND SLOWS HIM DOWN...

GOOD OLD AMIGO. HE SLOWED HIM DOWN! QUICK MEN, LASSO THAT BRONC AND HOLD HIM BEFORE HE GETS A CHANCE TO BUCK AND ROLL!



GOT HIM! HOLD ON, BOYS... HOLD ON! I'LL CUT BOBBY LOOSE!



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...AND SO, EVERY TIME THAT HORSE ARCHED HIS BACK I LET HIM HAVE IT WITH MY SPURS. NEVER GAVE HIM A CHANCE TO BUCK OR ROLL!

THOSE SPURS SAVED YOUR LIFE, BOBBY, BUT NOW WE'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH THAT HORSE-THIEF MIKE TARR AND HIS BADHATS!



YOU'D BETTER GET BACK TO CAMP AND REST, BOY...YOU'RE ALL BRUISED AND TUCKERED OUT!

OH, NO! I'M COMING ALONG! I HAVE A SPECIAL SCORE TO SETTLE WITH MIKE TARR!



THIS WAY I KNOW THE TRACKS OF OUR HORSES!

B-BAR-BEEEE!



KEEN-EYED HARKA EASILY FOLLOWS THE TRAIL OF THE STOLEN HORSES...AND SOON...

THERE THEY ARE...HOLED UP IN THAT ABANDONED RANCH-HOUSE FOR THE NIGHT...AND THE HORSES ARE IN THE OLD CORRAL...

HOW IN TARNATION ARE WE GOIN' T'UH MANAGE THIS HERE JOB WITHOUT GUNS?



I'VE GOT AN IDEA!

BOBBY! COME BACK!



SO FAR, SO GOOD. NOW TO GET TO THE CORRAL...ALL I HAVE TO DO IS GET THE GATE OPEN AND OUR HORSES WILL MAKE A RUN FOR IT!



THERE THEY GO...RIGHT FOR HOME GROUNDS! NOW TO DIVE BACK INTO THE BUSHES!



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